

Appl. No. : **09/676,895**
Filed : **October 2, 2000**

REMARKS

In further response to the Final Office Action mailed on August 11, 2003, Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the allowance of Claims 1, 2, 4-19, and 22-27. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider the remaining pending claims of the above-captioned application in view of the following comments. For the following reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 20, 21, 28, and 29 are also allowable.

Claims 20, 21, 28, and 29

Claims 20, 21, 28, and 29 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 first paragraph as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner that there is no basis for the limitation of the connecting rod journal residing on one side of the center plane throughout the entire rotation of the crankshaft. At least the disclosure provided by Figure 3 provides sufficient support for this limitation. Nevertheless, Applicant has amended Claims 20, 21, 28, and 29 to advance the prosecution of this case.

Claims 20, 21, 28, and 29 have been amended to include the limitation of the rotational axis of the crankshaft being offset to one side of the center plane, which the Examiner has acknowledged is clearly disclosed. Nakase teaches the crankshaft rotating about an axis, which lies substantially on a longitudinal extending center plane. Column 3 Lines 64-66. Nakase does not teach or disclose offsetting the crankshaft to provide some degree of center balance effect counterbalancing the weight of the valve devices. The specification of the above-identified application clearly states that the crankshaft axis is offset to one side of the center plane. Claims 20, 21, 28, and 29 thus define over the previously applied art and are adequately supported by the original application. Reconsideration of the ground of the rejection is respectfully requested.

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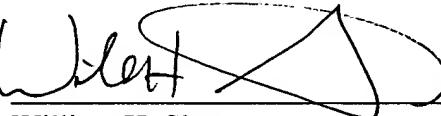
CONCLUSION

The undersigned has made a good faith effort to respond to all of the rejections in the case and to place the claims in condition for immediate allowance. Nevertheless, if any undeveloped issues remain or if any issues require clarification, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call Applicant's attorney, William H. Shreve at (949) 721-2895 (direct line), in order to resolve such issue promptly.

Respectfully submitted,

KNOBBE, MARTENS, OLSON & BEAR, LLP

Dated: February 11, 2004

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